



Egremont News

Issue 54

November, 2010

Rules & Regulations of this Newsletter:

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep residents informed of what is going on in their community. It is printed on a bi-monthly basis by the Selectmen's Office Staff. Articles submitted by Town Boards are not edited by the Select Board or Office Administrator. Outside organizations are allowed to submit articles of no longer than one column length. These articles are to be factual and will not be printed if they contain any political format, forum, or communication. We welcome reader input and hope you enjoy reading the Newsletter.

Egremont Special Town Meeting, November, 6th at 9:30 am.

The Town of Egremont is holding a Special Town Meeting, November 6th, Saturday, beginning at 9:30AM, in the Undermountain Elementary School Cafeteria, in Sheffield. Refreshments will be served. This is an extremely important meeting to consider and vote on four major issues that may **greatly impact Egremont's residents, our future and our taxes.** Everyone's attendance is strongly urged.

Article 1: Broadband for all of Egremont's residences and businesses has never been closer. This article is asking the town to vote to create a "Municipal Lighting Plant." It is the legal requirement, as a first step, that allows 47 towns in Western Massachusetts to create a cooperative, called WiredWest, to bring broadband to our homes and businesses. A 2/3 ballot vote, at two successive town meetings between 2 and 13 months apart, is required. An actual plant or facility is not being asked for, but rather to create a Town Department, with the Selectboard as its board. Once created, Egremont will join with the other towns, after they vote approval, and form a cooperative. Each member town will then appoint and send a representative to the cooperative (who will report back to the Selectboard in open meeting) to participate in creating final plans and bylaws. The cooperative will enter discussions to create its own open-access network, which would bring hi-speed, fiber optic broadband to ALL who want it. There is no cost to the town and Egremont may withdraw from the cooperative at any time. The Selectboard is not asking for a budget and no funds would be expended without voter approval. Egremont is the first town to put this article in front of the voters. Being an early adopter puts us in position for early access. If the vote fails, Egremont may not apply for two years. The first vote is

a formality, with the final vote next Spring or at the Annual Town Meeting, in May.

As many know, Verizon (a closed-access network) has no interest in offering service to all of Egremont. It just isn't affordable. If they did offer service they would "cherry-pick" and only offer service to those easily reached. WiredWest is committed to offer service to **everyone**, no matter the distance. Community-owned networks are found throughout the country, in areas that are too difficult to service or not financially viable to service. While Massachusetts is spending \$71 million to build out the "middle mile," and reach all town's anchor institutions – town halls, emergency services, schools, libraries, hospitals – it will not connect to residences and businesses. That is up to us. **On November 6th, you have the final say.**

Article 2: This is the Egremont Selectboard's amended version of the regional agreement. The School Committee presented a regional agreement to Egremont's Selectboard in April, too late for inclusion in our annual town meeting and to give our citizens a proper amount of time to review it. That proposed agreement takes away Egremont's right of self-determination regarding the closing of their satellite school, which was the intention of the original agreement. **The current, and past, Egremont Selectboard has voted to affirm Egremont's voter's right to determine the future of their school.** Since the agreement cannot be amended on the town meeting floor, the Egremont Selectboard petitioned an amended version to retain Egremont's voters' rights. Egremont's amended version was signed by more than 20% of our registered voters, a high threshold required by the current agreement. **This is not about whether to keep our school open or close it. It is not about the merits, costs or the facility. That debate remains the same regardless of which agreement is accepted. This is about WHO makes the decision. If Egremont voters want to retain their right of self-determination then**

they should support and accept Egremont's amended version of the agreement. On November 6th, you have the final say.

Article 3: This is the School Committee's version of the regional agreement.

Article 4: The new Application Round of grants under the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program was announced in February of this year. Under this program, a majority vote from the town is required **"to approve the project and grant permission to apply for, accept and expend state funding."** **The current estimate for construction of a new, 7,000+ square foot library is \$3,549,220. The amount not funded by the grant, that Egremont's citizens would have to carry, is \$1,647,781.** The cost of annual staff and maintenance is estimated at \$100,000, books not included. **On November 6th, you have the final say.**

Article 5: Following a very informative meeting in February, from which the Selectboard received a great amount of community input, the board continued its due diligence in researching options for a proposed new police facility. After a full Needs Assessment and review of four plans, the Selectboard will present to the voters plans for a modular designed, new structure that is 1,650 square feet, at a complete cost estimated at \$425,000. The location would be where the current Annex building stands. **On November 6th, you have the final say.**

The Egremont Select board hopes that each voter has the chance to attend the Special Town Meeting and vote. These issues may greatly impact the future of Egremont **and your taxes. On November 6th, you have the final say.**

Eco-tip: Cars less than about 7 years old should have their oil changed every 7500 to 10,000 miles, not every 3000 miles, as we learned for older cars.

(<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/11/your-money/11shortcuts.html?src=me&ref=general>)

Library Building Committee:

"Strong libraries are essential to education and life long learning, to economic development, to strong communities and a strong democracy."

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

In 2004 the Board of Selectmen charged the Library Trustees and Director with investigating the

possibility of making the library handicapped accessible. In that same year a structural report, commissioned by the Board of Selectmen, of the library building determined the existing building is not structurally sound enough to carry any more of a weight load. The lack of surrounding property and this structural issue prohibits expansion of the library on its present site.

The proposed plan for a new library building which includes a community meeting room, will be handicapped accessible, and will be located on town owned property adjacent to the Town Hall.

There will be a public forum on October 23rd at 9:30am at the Mount Everett School Campus. The Library Building Committee will be presenting information concerning the proposed building project that addresses the future needs of the Library of the town of Egremont.

We encourage you to attend this forum and to participate in the Special Town meeting on November 6th. We will be presenting a warrant article asking your permission to proceed with a construction grant application.

Approval will not obligate the town to expend any funds.

Historical Commission:

The Egremont Historical Commission is pleased to announce that it has received a \$5,000 Partnership Grant from the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. The funds will help the Commission further develop an initiative begun in 2008, when a UHVNHA grant helped fund the purchase of a computer and scanner used to photo digitize Archive holdings. This latest grant will help support creation of an interactive website which will make Archive information available to any interested party irrespective of his/her global location, on a 24/7 basis. It will also help EHC to initiate an Oral History project focused on town seniors, which will capture and retain fragile, fleeting and often unique historic data for posterity. EHC hopes to begin the first oral history interviews before the end of the year, and thanks our seniors in advance for their help in supporting this important project.

Are you a photographer? Have some great photos of Egremont you can share? The Egremont Historical Commission has received a grant to build a web site to provide the public with 24/7 access to Egremont's history, and the documents, maps, house

inventories and photos available in the Archives Room. We would love scenic photos of Egremont and some of its historic buildings to put up on the site. Even better if they are taken by our residents! Please email Maxine Lome at maxineconsults@aol.com or call 528-1827 if you can help our efforts.

The Egremont Historical Commission is uncovering many interesting facts about what this town used to look like and some of the characters who used to live and work here. Our own local history is fun. We'd like to share this fun with anyone who is interested and we'd love to hear what others know about our town, both North and South and In Between. We want to hear your stories.

A group of us are gathering at the Weathervane Inn on Sunday, November 14 from 2 to 4pm to honor and thank Betty Duryea and Margaret Candee for their many years on the Commission, and their remarkable preservation of our history. From them we have learned so much. So do join us.

As the weather begins to turn colder, it is a good time to consider how best to prepare your home for the winter months ahead, especially if it was built before modern insulating techniques were used. On November 6 an event at the William Cullen Bryant Homestead in Cummington will present information about various energy-efficient upgrades as well as suggest ideas for enhancing your home's weatherization without negatively impacting important historic fabric. "Winterizing Old Homes and Historic Buildings" will run from 9:00am - 12:30pm; cost: \$5 for Trustees of Reservations members, \$10 for non-members. Driving directions are available at www.bryant.ttor.org.

Eco-tip: Over the lifetime of 1 reusable bag you eliminate the need for 1000 plastic bags.

Council on Aging:

Medicare Decision Time - Open Enrollment starts November 14. PLEASE NOTE: Medicare Prescription Drug (Part D) Plans and Medicare Advantage Plans change every year. Many plans will no longer be available in 2011.

All people with Medicare should --

- ◆ Review the 2011 costs and coverage of their current plan.
- ◆ Compare with other plans in their area.

- ◆ Choose a plan that meets their needs and budget.

Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period starts November 15 and continues through December 31, for coverage beginning January 1, 2011.

There are significant differences between plans. Starting in 2011, different Part D Plans in our area will have monthly premiums from as low as \$14.80 up to as high as \$120.10. However monthly premiums are not the only things to consider. Plans have different deductibles, co-pays, covered drugs and restrictions. Plan information and cost estimates can be found by entering a drug list into the Medicare Plan Finder on www.medicare.gov.

The S.H.I.N.E. Program can help you in understanding your options and finding the lowest cost Part D. If you need help, call Rachel Shaw 528-3488 and she will assist you in accessing the information you need.

Seniors: Please remember that an active TRIAD COMMITTEE meets on the 2nd Wednesday, 2p.m., monthly, in the conference room of the Gt. Barrington Police Station. Professionals are available to listen, and help find solutions to safety and legal concerns.

Seniors:

Many Seniors are receiving phone calls and brochures about how they are able to lower their house payment. Please check with Homeowner Options for Massachusetts Elders (HOME, Inc.) At 781-848-5200 or go to www.elderhomeowners.org before taking any actions to refinance.

There is a new opportunity for Massachusetts residents over the age of 55 conducted with support from the National Council on Aging. It is a 6-week online program that teaches participants with any chronic health challenge how to better manage their conditions and feel better, have less pain and more energy, and many other improved health changes. It is called "Better Choices, Better Health". To sign up visit <https://selfmanage.org/BetterHealth/Signup> and fill in the "Sign up for a Workshop" box on the right hand side of the screen.

Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit: This is a targeted state paid for tax credit for property owner or renter 65 years or older who meets the income and property value guidelines. The maximum credit for this coming year is \$970. To qualify, an owner or renter's total income cannot exceed \$51,000 for a single person; \$64,000 for a head of household; and \$77,000 for a

married couple filing a joint return. The property's assessed valuation cannot exceed \$764,000. This program is also retroactive for three years. More information may be obtained from the MA Department of Revenue.

Eco-tip: Recycle old eyeglasses. Charities distribute them for us in third world countries.

Green Committee:

The holiday season is right around the corner. Instead of "*dreaming of a white Christmas*," make it Green. Follow these tips for a healthier and more sustainable planet.

Green Gift Wrapping: Avoid wrapping paper with foil -- it can't be recycled. Try wrapping your gifts with the funnies or brown paper. Decorate with rubber stamps, colored inks, or artist's paint. Be creative: one woman used her pretty head scarves and shawls for family presents (and collected them later).

Holiday Lights: Turn your tree lights on only after dark and unplug before you go to bed. Better yet, install a timer to do this automatically.

Green Holiday Parties: If you plan to use disposable serving ware for a holiday party make sure it is made from a compostable material like recycled paper (plates and napkins) or cornstarch (forks, knives and cups). Avoid plastic, and definitely say "no, no, no" to products made from Styrofoam (Public Enemy #1 for the environment!). The Egremont Green Committee has compostable serving ware available to the public at ridiculously low wholesale prices. Here's an example: 125 9" dinner plates - \$14.50; 125 7" plates \$7.50; 150 soup bowls - \$10.50; 100 forks or spoons or knives - \$4.50. Give Juliette Haas a call at 528-0182 x 22 for the complete price list or to order.

It's easy to incorporate a green sensibility into your holidays. In the spirit of giving, remember to support the future of the planet. Your efforts *do* make a difference.

Town Clerk:

The State Election is November 2. The polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. If you need an Absentee Ballot your request must be received in writing by 12:00 noon on November 1.

Shortly after January 1st you will be receiving your 2011 Census Form. Your prompt response ensures your continued status as an active voter. If you

do not receive a form by January 15 please contact the Town Hall so one can be mailed to you.

Board of Health:

_____Autumn in Egremont brings cooler, crisper days with the sights and smells of foliage season. The days seem to call us outside to share in the beauty and wonder of nature. Following are photographs of some Egremont residents enjoying a healthy walk. Why not follow their lead and incorporate exercise into your personal wellness routine. Twenty minutes of exercise a day is all it takes for a healthier you.



Robin and Peter Goldberg enjoying a crisp early morning walk.



Ann and Vince Murphy happily walking in the Baldwin Hill area near their home



Bev Almond (92 years young!) enjoying her daily walk to the top of Baldwin Hill

Treasurer/Collector

PLEASE NOTE:

FY 2011 - Real Estate & Personal Property Tax 2nd quarter tax payments are due November 1, 2010.

Please note: Questions concerning your tax assessment MUST be directed to the Board of Assessors.

On Line Banking - UNIPAY on line banking is a great tool for last minute payments of any bill owed to the town. Go to the Town of Egremont web site www.egremont-ma.gov/ and click on pay your bills on line. Follow the instructions from that point. You will be able to use ACH or a credit card. Thank you to all who are using the on-line product. It is working great. Please give it a try. **Note:** When making payments through your bank bill pay please remember to use your current tax bill number and check to be sure the remittance address is correct.

Questions/Confusions - I will be glad to address any question that would be of general information to the taxpayers. Submit questions and concerns pertaining to the Tax Collector/Treasurer to Pat, P.O. Box 368 So. Egremont. Office hours - Tax Collector 7-3 Monday through Friday or by appointment.

Democratic Town Committee:

At its September 22nd meeting, the Democratic Town Committee voted unanimously to adopt the following resolution, "So as to be in conformity with the Massachusetts General Laws, Section 76, the EGREMONT TOWN COMMITTEE resolves that future party caucuses shall be only open to registered Democrats".

Egremont Garden Club:

WOW!!! Have you noticed those yellow mums at the intersection of Creamery Road and Route 23? The Egremont Garden Club certainly hopes so. As part of the Club's Civic Program we hope to eventually plant gardens at all of the intersections in the north and south villages. **HOWEVER TO ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL WE NEED YOUR HELP.** The Club will plant the gardens (or you can if you wish) but we need help with watering and weeding. All volunteers are welcome.

Some things you may not know about what the Egremont Garden Club does...

- *we provide a scholarship each year to a graduating senior from Mt. Everett Regional High School majoring in horticulture or a related field. This is funded through the Gertude Burdsall Memorial Scholarship.
- *we fund field trips for all grade levels at Undermountain Elementary School. This fall we have funded trips to the Berkshire Botanical Garden for grades 2 and 3. We also fund their trips to the American Indian Institute in Washington, CT and provide a scholarship for a 5th grader attending Nature's Classroom in Ivoryton, CT. We anticipate funding throughout the school year for other grades levels as we have done in the past.
- *we plant and maintain many of the gardens in the villages. Some examples are the bridge boxes in So Egremont. Isn't it amazing how those pansies have survived? Lots of watering by our members.
- *we planted and maintain the gardens by the restrooms at French Park.
- *we plant and maintain the gardens on the green in So Egremont and at the Town Hall.
- * we planted and maintain the garden at the entrance to Hillside Cemetery.
- *we planted and maintain the gardens at the Egremont Library.
- *most recently we planted a tree at the Egremont Library in memory of long time Garden Club member Bea Noble. Bea was a long time resident of Egremont and an avid gardener and patron of the Egremont Library. This Red Sunset Maple truly seemed a fitting memorial for Bea.

*we provide flowers for the tray favors for the Senior Center in Gt Barrington.

*the Egremont Garden Club makes those beautiful wreaths that you see each holiday season on all public buildings in the villages.

Now that you know more about what the Egremont Garden Club does we hope you will join us as a member or a volunteer. We welcome your support and ideas. Contact Nancy Sanders (528-) or Peggy Muskrat (528-3605) to become involved. Please help us in making Egremont even more beautiful than it already is. To quote..." together we can make a difference."

Egremont Holiday Trees 2010:

The Egremont holiday tree team is gearing up!!

Our trees are from Peter Sweet again and this year he has some posts that should make our installation day, November 20th, a bit easier! The trees will stay up through what we hope will be a snowy President's Day Weekend. We use LED lights and are hoping to raise funds to purchase timers this year to use even less power so please give generously. Checks can be made payable to the Town of Egremont or a contribution of cash where you see our Tree Jugs will help fund the number of trees we can afford to install. We can also use some helping hands for light trimming. Volunteers or questions can call Susan Bachelder at 528-6505.

CAROL SINGING! On **Saturday, December 11th at 4pm**, there will be a carol sing on the South Egremont Green and Sarah Gossage has offered to host apple cider afterwards for our chilled vocalists. Mark your calendars.

Board meeting schedule:

Subject to change. Please see postings of meetings at Town Hall and the Post Offices for more detail.

Archives Room - First Saturday 9-noon and May to October the third Monday 2-4pm
or by appointment

Assessors - Tuesdays & Thursday 9am to 12noon & by appointment

Board of Health - Monday- 8am to 1pm, Tuesday 8:30am to 12pm & 12:30 to 2:30pm Wednesday & Thursday 8am to 1pm Meetings - First & Third Thursday 9am to 11am

Board of Selectmen - Meetings every other Tuesday evenings 7pm. Office weekdays 7am to 3pm.

Building Inspector - Tuesday 12:30pm to 3:30pm.

Other times and inspections by appointment

Conservation Commission - Second and Fourth Thursdays 7:00pm

Finance Committee - Wednesdays 6:30pm January through April. Other times as needed.

Library - Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 2-6pm & Saturday 9-12noon

Planning Board - Second & Fourth Monday 7:30pm

School Committee: Second & Fourth Thursdays 6pm Mt. Everett High School Library

Tax Collector: Monday - Friday 7:00am to 3:00pm

Town Clerk - Every other Tuesday evenings 6pm-9pm, Tuesday mornings 9am to 12noon
or by appointment

Transfer Station - Tuesday & Thursday 8am to 1pm, Saturday 8am to 3pm, Sunday 12noon to 4pm

Water Department - Office weekdays 8am to 2pm Meetings Third Thursday 4:30pm at Town Hall

Zoning Board of Appeals - as needed

To reach a board member or to leave a message please call the Town Hall.

Business listings:

In an effort to promote local small businesses, the following businesses/services located in Egremont have agreed to be listed here. If we missed asking you and you wish to be included, please send your information to the Town Hall.

The Silo B&B - guest accommodations
413-528-5195

The Inn at Sweet Water Farm - B&B
1 Prospect Lake Road
413-528-2882
www.innsweetwater.com

The Weathervane Inn - Lodging
413/800-528-9580

Baldwin Hill Farm B&B -
121 Baldwin Hill Road N/S
528-4092
www.baldwnhillfarm.com

John Andrews' Restaurant - Restaurant
413-528-3469

Swiss Hutte Country Inn and Restaurant-
Restaurant & Lodging
413-528-6200

Howard's Antiques - Antique Lighting & Restoration
413-528-1232
www.howardsantiquelighting.com

Red Barn Antiques - Antique lighting & fine metal
polishing
413-528-3230

Home - Asian Antiques & Interior Objects
195 Hillsdale Road (Route 23)
413-528-5383

www.homeasianantiques.com

41 Main Antiques Gallery - Vintage and modern
furniture, antiques, collectibles, architectural
and decorative objects.
413-528-0112

www.41mainantiques.com

Blue Rider Stables - Therapeutic Horseback Riding
Lessons, summer programs
www.bluerider.org
413-528-5299

Green River Arabians & Pintos -
Horse Boarding, lessons, judging.
413-528-2367 arabpinto13@yahoo.com

Indian Line Farm - Community Supported Agriculture
(CSA) & Farmers Markets
413-528-8301

www.indianlinefarm.com

Turner Farms Maple Syrup - Phillips Road, open 7am
to 7pm 7 days a week. 413-528-5710

G&S Gventer "Books - Buy & Sell Books
413-528-2327

Elfi Six Shiatsu/Acutonics®, Bodywork
413-644-9979

www.CosmicResonance.com

Peter Goldberg, Dipl. Ac - Acupuncture, Pain
Management 413-528-5055

Zorn Family Chiropractic-Chiropractor
44 Main Street, South Egremont
413-528-9654
www.healingspiritdc@yahoo.com

Zorn Core Fitness - Boot Camp
Personal, Couples & Group Training
Cardio Room coming soon - \$45 per month
46 Main Street, South Egremont
413-528-1594

aribzorn@yahoo.com

Yoga at Zorn Core Fitness, with Karin Beebe
Ashtanga Yoga & Gentle/Hatha Yoga
46 Main Street
413-528-0828
kbyoga@gmail.com

Cory B. Loder, L.I.C.S.W. - Individual & Couple
Counseling - Specializing in Dual Diagnosis
9 Miller View

413-528-0393

1-888-528-0393

Divine Automotive - Automotive repair
413-528-8007

Old Egremont Country Store - groceries, beer, wine,
liquor, newspapers, lottery, & much more
413-528-4796

Blueberry Lane Home Design - Interior decorating
413-528-9633

Closet Collection - clothing & household
consignment shop
413-528-6236

Berkshire Veneer Company - wholesale/retail
wood veneer sales
413-644-9696

L and L Construction - Home repairs, additions,
new home building
413-528-5548

"Jack of All Trades"-Handyman Services
Jack Buckley

413-528-1982

413-446-1982

Catamount Ski Area - Skiing
413-528-1262

www.catamountski.com

Anita Schilling - Real Estate Listing & Sales
Barnbrook Realty
413-528-4423

anitacentury21@aol.com

Florence F. Browner Real Estate - Full Service
90 Creamery Road
413-528-3266

flobro@wildblue.net

Kenver Ltd - Winter Sports Equipment, Apparel &
Accessories

39 Main Street

413-528-2330

www.kenverltd.com

Maple Leaf Art Gallery - Joan Mentzinger
154 Hillsdale Road, Route 23

The Agency Without Walls - Helen Krancer
Advertising, sales promotion, direct marketing.
413-644-9700

helen@agencywithoutwalls.com

Cyber Knight - Matthew Wall
PC repairs - Networking - Internet
413-528-5415
matt@cyber-knight.net

James Olmsted - Outdoor Services & Caretaking

Field mowing

413-528-0102

pager 413-261-2150

Berkshire Wildlife Solutions - Resolving conflicts with nature. Eric F. Ives

Mass Problem Animal Control Agent

Consultation/Inspection, Capture, removal and exclusionary work.

413-528-9813 413-250-5094

PAPERCHASERS Barbara Fields - Organizing and

Productivity Services, Project and Time

Management

413-528-2824

barbara@paperchasers.com

Support local businesses

Fishin Daze

By Stanley Farnum

*When I was just a youngun, like all kids always wishin,
For a B.B. gun or school to quit, but mostly to go fishin,
I'd sit and dream, when the teacher blabbed, bout
rithmatic
an books, an I could see inside my head, my pole an
worms an hook.*

*I know that big ole trout is layin there,
where the brook kinda nibbles the shore,
and right where the little ripples shine,
I'll bet there's three or four,
just a waitin an driftin in that ole pool,
kind of shadows bove the sandy floor.*

*It ain't just the fishin alone that's so good,
it's the water a whisperin along.
And the feel of the sun shinin down where you sit,
and the sweet smell of spring an wind song.*

*An stayin so still, little birds touch your hand,
and a squirl starts to chatter nearby.*

*If you listen hard, you can hear the grass grow,
an course there ain't no blue like the sky.*

*If you look really hard, at those big fleecy clouds,
you ain't seein just fluff,
there really is lots of pictures up there,
of faces an places an stuff.*

*So you figger it must be a whole nother world,
makes you feel awful small, sure enough.*

*I got thinkin bout heaven, for a little while,
but I bet when I'm there for admission,
I'll have to wait, on the top golden stair,
cause god's probably just gone afishin.*

**Town of Egremont
P.O. Box 368
South Egremont MA 01258
413-528-0182
www.egremont-ma.gov
tegrement@yahoo.com**

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**"The Town of Egremont is an equal opportunity
provider and employer."**